

OUSA 2011 Spring General Assembly

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
March 13, 2011

PLENARY MINUTES

Called to order at 10:54 am.

Members Present

ALMA MATTER SOCIETY OF QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY (Morgan Campbell, Safiah Chowdhury, Mira Dineen, Chris Rudnicki, Kieran Slobodin, Julian Traficante)

BROCK UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION (Sohail Ahmed, Daud Grewal, Steven Nicholls, Luke Speers, Chris Ventura)

McMASTER STUDENTS UNION (Alicia Ali, Hilary Chase, Douglas Calderwood-Smith, Matthew Dillon-Leitch, Joe Finkle, Mary Koziol, Huzafa Saeed)

UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR STUDENTS' ALLIANCE (Ehimare Faith Imaralu, Kayla Mallen, Joanna Wolinski, Robert Woodrich)

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' COUNCIL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO (Tamer Abdalla, Neha Chandrachud, Meaghan Coker, Emily Jarvis, Alysha Li, Patrick Searle, Brandon Sousa, Mike Tithecott, Patrick Whelan, Jennifer Ye Won Kim)

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO FEDERATION OF STUDENTS (Umar Aftab, Natalie Cockburn, Matthew Colphon, Kristen Leal, Konrad Listwan-Ciesielski, Trevor Jenkins, Heather Mawhinney, Bradley Moggach, Nick Soave, Andrea Taylor)

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION (Justin Amaral, Saad Aslam, Luke Dotto, Sean Madden, Mike Pew)

Observers Present

GUELPH CENTRAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION (Kevin Bowman, Nick Stepanov)

McMASTER ASSOCIATION OF PART-TIME STUDENTS (Sam Minniti, Violet Wakeman-Ajandi)

1. Roll Call

Representatives of all seven OUSA member schools were in attendance.

2. Approval of the Agenda

BIRT OUSA Assembly approves the Plenary Agenda.

Moved by Finkle (McMaster), seconded by Speers (Brock).

TAYLOR (Waterloo): Motion to amend the agenda item 7b to read:

BIRT OUSA Assembly adopts the policy paper on Aboriginal students.
BIFRT OUSA Assembly tasks the Steering Committee with conducting extensive consultations with Aboriginal students and communities and incorporating the feedback into an amended policy paper on Aboriginal students for submission at the 2011 Fall General Assembly.

Motion seconded by Rudnicki (Queen's).

TAYLOR (Waterloo): This was discussed in the breakouts as something that was important and I think it is something that we should have in writing to ensure that we follow up.

No debate on the motion.

Motion to amend adopted.

Motion as amended adopted.

3. Approval of the Speaker

BIRT OUSA Assembly approves Ross Chaudry as the Speaker for Plenary.

Motion by Campbell (Queen's), seconded by Wolinski (Windsor).

No debate.

Motion adopted.

The Speaker introduces Robert's Rules and rules of the day.

4. Approval of 2010 Fall GA Plenary Minutes

BIRT OUSA Assembly approves the 2010 Fall General Assembly Plenary Minutes.

Moved by Slobodin (Queen's), seconded by Mallen (Windsor).

SOUSA: Please correct Jennifer Ye Won Kim's last name to read Kim only.

MOGGACH: Please add me as present in the minutes.

Motion adopted.

5. Officer and Home Office Reports

BIRT OUSA Assembly receives the reports of the Officers and of Home Office.

a) President's Report

Presentation given by President Meaghan Coker.

b) Vice-President (Finance) Report

Presentation given by Vice-President (Finance) Saad Aslam.

c) Vice-President (Administration) Report

Presentation given by Vice-President (Administration) Joe Finkle.

d) Home Office Report

SPEAKER: You all received a copy of this report on Wednesday. We'll do a straw poll done for if a verbal presentation is necessary.

Straw poll concludes that a verbal report is unnecessary. No questions.

Motioned by Slobodin (Queen's), seconded by Woodrich (Windsor).

Motion adopted.

6. Presentation of Mid-Term Financial Report

BIRT OUSA Assembly receives the mid-term financial report from the Vice-President (Finance) and Executive Director.

Presentation given by Vice-President (Finance) Saad Aslam.

MAWHINNEY (Waterloo): Did we go 113% over on meeting expenses?

ASLAM (Laurier): No, we spent 113% of the budgeted amount, so 13% over.

Motioned by Aslam (Laurier), seconded by Leal (Waterloo).

Motion adopted.

7. Policy Resolutions

a) Ancillary Fees

BIRT OUSA Assembly adopts the policy paper on ancillary fees.

Presentation of changes to the policy paper by Finkle (McMaster).

KIM (Western): Were the averages in Table One updated to reflect the changes?

FINKLE (McMaster): I believe so.

DOTTO (Laurier): How often do staff and faculty have non-voting seats versus voting seats on Boards and Senates?

FINKLE (McMaster): We haven't had time to do enough research into all the compositions of governing bodies, but we're confident that the five groups outlined [students, faculty, staff, administration, public at large] are on all governing bodies and should have around one-fifth representation as the fairest way.

DOTTO (Laurier): Just want to guard against getting non-voting seats which aren't as effective.

FINKLE (McMaster): Yes, we're talking about voting seats.

AMARAL (Laurier): Motion to amend the text under Recommendation Eleven to add: "A mechanism should be included to ensure basic conventions are made readily available and apparent to both teachers and students." Seconded by Slobodin (Queen's).

SPEAKER: Is this motion friendly to the author?

FINKLE: Amendment taken as friendly.

Motioned by Finkle (McMaster), seconded by Leal (Waterloo).

Motion adopted.

b) Aboriginal Students

BIRT OUSA Assembly adopts the policy paper on Aboriginal students. BIFRT OUSA Assembly tasks the Steering Committee with conducting extensive consultations with Aboriginal students and communities and incorporating the feedback into an amended policy paper on Aboriginal students for submission at the 2011 Fall General Assembly.
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Presentation of changes to the policy paper by Rudnicki (Queen's).

RUDNICKI (Queen's): I am not going to go through the smaller grammatical and reference changes.

MOGGACH (Waterloo): When I was going through the changes, I felt that most of the feedback I heard was not incorporated so I'd prefer if you went through in as much detail as possible.

RUDNICKI (Queen's): Absolutely. I didn't mean to suggest that I wouldn't be going through the more substantive changes. Just won't do the citations updates and minor word changing.

LEAL (Waterloo): Can we have the version with comments e-mailed out to delegates?

RUDNICKI (Queen's): Yes, we will work on that.

COCKBURN (Waterloo): Move for a recess so that the version with the comments can be sent out to delegates.

SPEAKER: I believe a recess is probably not necessary, but let's take a quick break while it is sent out.

5 minute break

RUDNICKI (Queen's): Now that it's been sent out, let's get started.

LEAL (Waterloo): For the purpose of clarity and consistency, can we go over the motion amendment again?

RUDNICKI (Queen's): [Re-reads the motion.] This is something that we are really excited about. We are thinking about having Steering Committee work with their local Aboriginal student centres in gathering feedback, in addition to focus groups on campuses.

LEAL (Waterloo): I understand the need to move forward on this paper, but I am struggling with the process because we have not done consultation with the Aboriginal students on our campus.

RUDNICKI (Queen's): Absolutely valid concern. This is something we have learned a lot from. I think we are considering adding a 'duty to consult' provision to our policies or bylaws to ensure that we do more consultation in the future.

TAYLOR (Waterloo): Motion to amend Principle 10 to read: "Both universities and government should work with Aboriginal communities to ensure that post-secondary institutions in Ontario incorporate Aboriginal knowledge, values, pedagogy and languages into both classroom instruction and the institution's wider environment in a manner that recognizes the importance of Aboriginal program control and delivery."

RUDNICKI (Queen's): I think that clarifies the language well.

SPEAKER: Any objections to this change? The amendment is taken as friendly.

CHOWDURY (Queen's): Is this paper being accepted?

RUDNICKI (Queen's): Yes, but the BIFRT will mean it comes back in the Fall General Assembly revised based on consultation.

CHOWDURY (Queen's): Ok, then I think it's a concern that colonialism is not in the paper given its importance to this issue. I did a search for the term and it is not in the paper.

LEAL (Waterloo): Have we looked to see what other provincial alliances are doing in their advocacy work for Aboriginal students?

RUDNICKI (Queen's): We looked to CFS-O, but we have not looked widely outside the province. The context varies a lot between provinces. The advocacy work will continue and we will look to best practices.

ABDALLA (Western): Wouldn't the impact of colonialism be implied in the nature of the whole paper?

CHOWDURY (Queen's): I think it's important to acknowledge it, though I've just noticed that it says 'colonial' in the paper.

RUDNICKI (Queen's): I agree it's important.

Motioned by Rudnicki (Queen's), seconded by Woodrich (Windsor).

Motion adopted.

c) Student Success

BIRT OUSA Assembly adopts the policy paper on student success.

Presentation of changes to the policy paper by Coker (Western) and Soave (Waterloo).

Motioned by Coker (Western), seconded by Soave (Waterloo).

SOUSA (Western): Motion to amend Recommendation Nine to add “and should follow faculty from institution to institution” to the end of the recommendation. Motion seconded by Whelan (Western).

COLPHON (Waterloo): Point of personal privilege – can you move to the microphone?

COKER (Western): That sort of transfer may be in violation of certain collective agreements. We were hesitant to encroach on this without looking into the legal and privacy implications further. Also a bit concerns about the massive administrative hurdles to making this happen. This may be better examined in the Accountability paper coming in the fall, since we know we need to do more research.

SPEAKER: Do you consider this friendly or unfriendly before we move to debate?

COKER (Western): I think it is unfriendly.

RUDNICKI (Queen’s): Point of information – can you provide more detail on the amendment?

SOUSA (Western): Just like ratemyprofessors.ca, this information should be accessible to students regardless of where the professors come from. The Ontario government could play a key role in driving this forward. Because we lobby the Ontario government, we think that the legal hurdles to such a process may not apply. We want to make sure students are getting what they pay for.

LEAL (Waterloo): I recognize that every school does evaluations differently, so combining that data may not result in full data sets. I have concern about amalgamating something so variable.

DOTTO (Laurier): Speaking against. Our schools do not encourage or like ratemyprofessors.ca. It is put up by students, not by faculty or administrators. So I think this logic is not sound.

MOGGACH (Waterloo): Speaking against the motion. Let’s do more research. Coming from Waterloo, I’m fairly confident this would break human resources policies, so let’s consider this in the future.

COKER (Western): Certainly understand the reasoning behind this. You certainly want to be able to know the professors’ abilities going into the class. But I think this is something that could be incorporated into the policy after more research. Transparency and openness is the end goal, but without more investigation, it would be irresponsible to include this in here.

COCKBURN (Waterloo): Should we consider if teaching evaluations would be available to prospective students?

COKER (Western): Again, I think this is something we need to think more about. But something institution-wide is something we could certainly support.

SPEERS (Brock): Does breakout feedback get kept so that when this comes back, these sorts of things are considered?

COKER (Western): The feedback is kept.

SPEAKER: Sousa, you have the opportunity to close.

SOUSA (Western): Declined.

Motion to amend defeated.

AFTAB (Waterloo): Looking for confirmation of changes to two of the pieces you mentioned but I didn't see in the paper regarding psychological needs. I think I may have the wrong version of the paper.

COKER (Western): Yes, they are there in the text.

Motion adopted.

8. Future Policy and Research

- a) Tuition – policy paper
- b) System Growth – policy paper
- c) Accountability – policy paper

BIRT OUSA Assembly tasks the Steering Committee with preparing the above policy papers for submission at the 2011 Fall General Assembly.

Motioned by Rudnicki (Queen's), seconded by Aslam (Laurier).

COKER (Western): We received some comments that we may want to engage in an open forum discussion if these are passed to get some feedback on the topics. Perhaps we could do some brainstorming if this motion passes.

SPEAKER: Let's do a straw poll. [A few interested, mostly abstentions]

SLOBODIN (Queen's): Point of information – lunch is ready. We could break and hold that discussion over lunch.

MOGGACH (Waterloo): I have one question regarding the number of policies – seemed like tuition will not require a lot of work to re-write, could we look at adding a fourth paper to the future policy list?

SLOBODIN (Queen's): I just want to point out that the Aboriginal policy will be re-worked after consultations and we will be preparing for an election, so there will be other time-consuming activities.

Motion adopted.

SPEAKER: Should we take a lunch break and then continue with the formal agenda and the informal discussion?

COLPHON (Waterloo): Can we finish the agenda instead of breaking for lunch?

COKER (Western): Point of information – we have a few additional comments at the end, but that sounds fine.

SPEAKER: I am going to propose a recess right before adjournment, and then a discussion period on future policy.

9. Honourary Membership

BIRT OUSA Assembly bestow an honorary membership on Henry Mandelbaum.

COKER (Western): This award is meant as recognition of significant assistance and dedication toward our efforts. There are currently 11 honorary members in our history. Most of them are former staff members. We thought that this year it would be interesting if we could open it up one of our partners, who are important people that we work with on an ongoing basis. Henry Mandelbaum is the Executive Director of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Association. [Reads biography] We have worked together on countless initiatives. While we have had our differences along the way, Henry remains a friend of OUSA and is deserving of honorary membership.

LEAL (Waterloo): How many are traditionally given out?

COKER (Western): There were 8 given out five years ago and then 3 last year. We decided this year to go with one so we could do one per year and make it more sustainable.

Motioned by Coker (Western), seconded by Woodrich (Windsor).

Motion adopted.

COKER (Western): There was one further item I wanted to discuss in the minutes and that is recognizing the commitment of delegates here. There are a number of people here that have been to a number of General Assemblies and today will be their last Assembly. They are: Saad Aslam, Andrea Taylor, Nick Soave, Mary Koziol, Douglas Calderwood-Smith, Robert Woodrich, Mike Tithecott, Brandon Sousa, Sohail Ahmed and Alexi White.

SOAVE (Waterloo): We missed someone. This is also our President's last General Assembly and you've been to four, so congratulations.

COKER (Western): We'd also like to recognize our guest observers and ask if they'd like to say a few words.

BOWMAN (Guelph): We just wanted to thank you all for having us, and the AMS for being such gracious hosts. For those of you who don't know, OUSA made a presentation to our board, and we'll have a follow up discussion this week and hopefully have some update.

MINNITI (MAPS): On behalf of Violet and I, I want to thank very much for the invite both to this General Assembly and in the past. We'd also like to thank Joe and Mary at the MSU for being so welcoming. We're happy to report that Violet and I will be strongly endorsing that we become full members of OUSA at our next Board meeting. Given that we represent part-time students, we hope to bring a focus on part-time students and look forward to being around the table next year. We thank you for your hospitality.

COKER (Western): Exciting news. I'd also like to thank our Speaker. Please fill out your feedback forms and stick around for photos.

SPEAKER: Any other business? Motion to adjourn?

10. Adjournment

Motioned by Leal (Waterloo), seconded by Ventura (Brock).

No debate.

Motion to adjourn adopted.